

THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.

Effect of the Reorganization of the Army.

Farewell Addresses of General French, Newton and Pleasanton.

60. 61. 62.

Mr. Finley Anderson's Despatch.

ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.
HEADQUARTERS IN THE FIELD, March 20, 1864.

General Order No. 10, reorganizing the Army of Potomac, has caused considerable comment in this army. It has been a fruitful theme of discussion, particularly among the troops which have been consolidated into other corps. The object of the order is to secure greater strength and means of consolidation. Experience shows that a grand army, composed of few army corps with numerical strength proportionately great, is more effective than one composed of many small army corps, as well for purposes of discipline in camp as of extensive operations on the field of battle. It is the prevailing opinion in this army, even among officers, are most unfavorably affected by the change, that the present consolidation will result in benefit to the victor.

It is with great regret, however, that the soldiers leave the corps with which they have been heretofore identified. The members of the First, and particularly the Third corps, which was the largest in the army have heard with sorrow the order which destroys the organization of the army, and whose distinctive characteristics they have fought with honor in many battle fields, and where the blood of their brave companions who fell so nobly, has covered the names of those who with lasting glory. Though the order allows them to retain their badges and distinctive marks, it is with marked reluctance that they under those strong associations which bind in a common fellowship companions in arms on the field of battle. None partake of this feeling so much as the general officers who have been removed from their old commands, and the various staff officers whose positions have been changed in consequence.

The general officers, however, have gracefully yielded to the requirements of this order with a spirit of magnanimity becoming noble soldiers. Only their personal aids de camp accompany the general.

The order was promulgated immediately after Lieutenant General Grant's arrival at his headquarters in the field. It was not General Grant, however, but General Meade, who designated the particular corps to be consolidated. General Grant has simply given his sanction to the order.

When the news was first announced there was great activity at the several corps headquarters indicated, and arrangements were soon made for an immediate compliance with the provisions of the order. Soon after Major General French received the order relieving him from command of the Fifth corps, Major General Warren, the newly assigned commander, rose up as the corps headquarters to constitute the new corps, and formally assumed command. Major General French was evidently deeply touched when he learned that he was ordered to report in Kennesaw, far away from the command with which he had been so long identified. He will be accompanied to Leesworth by two of his aides—Lieutenant Ingham and Lieutenant Snyder. Captain Jay, his other aid, has been assigned to duty at the headquarters of the army.

General French, after stating the farewell address to his troops sent to you yesterday, was escorted to the depot by a number of his officers, and went down to Washington, en route for the West.

Major General French was also extremely sorry to leave the soldiers with whom he had fought on so many battle fields. His officers looked to his headquarters to receive their assurance of personal regard, and to express their regret at his approaching departure. They also spoke of the historic fields on which they had fought together. Many of them accompanied him to Brandy Station, where there had his farewell before he went to Philadelphia. General French issued the following characteristic address to his soldiers:—

GENERAL ORDER—NO. 35.
HEAD QUARTERS, THIRD ARMY CORPS,
BRANDY STATION, March 24, 1864.

Having been detached from the Army of the Potomac to command the Third Army Corps, I have the honor to desire to express the personal feelings of regret with which the order is received. The consolidation of the army into fewer corps, and the consequent change of command, are so conspicuous for their gallantry and ability. Only known in the department where bullets whistle, there is a strong probability that I may become a victim of those bullets whistling with whom I have been so long associated with pride and distinction.

WM. H. FRENCH, Major General Volunteers.

General Newton's Address to his Troops.

Major General Newton, lately commanding the First corps, which is now merged into the Fifth, was unusually beloved by his troops. In a quiet manner he bade farewell to his division and brigade commanders. General Newton has been intimately associated with the Army of the Potomac, and has fought in nearly all its battles. Last evening the troops belonging to the Brooklyn Fourteenth regiment, in his corps, gave musical entertainment in Culpepper, at which some pleasing allusions to the General were made. He issued the following:—

HEADQUARTERS, FIRST CORPS, March 25, 1864.

In rolling musketry from its ranks, I have to express the pride and pleasure I have experienced with you, as my profound regret at our separation.

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